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News Release

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Williams Ranger District to manage Springs Fire, suppress Key Hole Fire; Mason Fire on Tusayan Ranger District grows to more than 3,000 acres

Williams, Ariz., July 14, 2015—For Immediate Release. Managers of the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest have decided to manage the 98-acre Springs Fire to meet resource objectives but suppress the 17-acre Key Hole Fire.

The Springs Fire is located about 9 miles south of the City of Williams east of Davenport Knoll and 2 miles south of Summit Mountain on the east side of County Road 73. The lightning-caused wildfire has been growing over the last few days due to drier weather conditions and is burning in an area managers consider to be in need of treatment with fire.

Based on the location of the Springs Fire and its continued growth despite intermittent monsoonal activity, fire managers have decided to manage it over the coming days and possibly weeks in order to improve forest health, allow fire to play its natural role as a disturbance factor in the ecosystem, enhance wildlife habitat, and reduce the potential for future high-intensity fires.

Smoke from the Springs Fire has been visible at various times from County Road 73 and from Interstate 40 in the Parks area west to Williams. This morning, light smoke from the Springs Fire was noticeable in Williams for a brief period before lifting as temperatures increased. Light smoke may also be present from as far east as Garland Prairie west to Williams. There are no closures in effect related to the Springs Fire.

Fire crews are conducting work in preparation for the Springs Fire's likely growth. Prep work includes lining range fences, aspen enclosures, and other potentially fire-sensitive resources in the area. This important work ensures that as the fire spreads naturally, fire managers will be able to allow it to grow without the risk of negatively impacting these other values in the area.

While the Springs Fire has proven to be a good candidate for management to achieve resource objectives, the Key Hole Fire, which is located just north of Key Hole Sink near Duck Lake north of Interstate 40, has not. Fire crews are suppressing the Key Hole Fire because it has remained relatively inactive due to receiving significant precipitation over the last week or more. When deciding whether to manage or suppress a wildfire, forest managers not only consider the location of the fire but also its current and anticipated level of activity and growth, as well as the effects it is having on forest resources.

Mason Fire

On the Tusayan Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest, the Mason Fire grew to 3,056 acres yesterday as it backed out of an area dominated by ponderosa pine into pinyon-juniper woodlands. The fire, which has been managed as part of the Jar Complex to benefit forest resources over the last couple of weeks, is expected to continue slowly backing into these sparser fuels and eventually go out on its own. Fire managers anticipate relatively light smoke production over the coming days and reduced fire activity due to sparser fuels and predicted monsoons in the area later this week.

Additional Information

Additional fire information is available through the following sources:

- InciWeb Springs Fire - <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4391/>
- InciWeb Mason Fire (Jar Complex) - <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4344/>
- Kaibab National Forest Fire Information Phone Line (928) 635-8311
- Text Message - text 'follow kaibabnf' to 40404.

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